

# *Immigration Guide*

## *Philippines*

*PwC International Assignment Services*



### *Introduction*

Temporary visitors to the Philippines are categorised as Restricted Nationals and Non-Restricted Nationals. Foreign nationals who fall under the restricted nationals category are required to secure an entry visa (business or tourist) with the Philippine Consulate abroad in their home country, place of residence or employment, prior to their entry to the Philippines. The Philippine Consulate normally grants an entry visa with an initial stay of 59 days and may be extended for 30 or 60 days within an aggregate period of two years (2) or twenty four (24) months.

Foreign nationals who are categorised as Non-Restricted Nationals are allowed to enter the Philippines visa free under a visa waiver of 30 days, extendable for another 29 days. After completion of the 59-day visa waiver status, the visitor's visa may be extended for 30 or 60 days within a continuous period of three (3) years or thirty six (36) months. The non--restricted foreign nationals are required to present their passport with a validity period of at least six months from date of travel and a valid return ticket to the Immigration officer at the airport.

### *Business Visitor*

The Temporary Visitor's Visa [9(a)-Tourist] Visa is the default visa granted to foreign nationals entering the Philippines for business purpose such as attending meetings, conferences, seminars, conducting ocular inspection, attending sales calls to potential Philippine clients, and exploring new business opportunities in the Philippines.

A foreign national with a 9(a)-Tourist Visa may convert to a work or resident visa during the stay in the Philippines without the need to leave the country.

### *Work Permit and Visa*

#### ***Special Work Permit***

Foreign nationals intending to work in the Philippines for a period of not more than six months may secure a Special Work Permit (SWP). A SWP is initially valid for three months and may be extended for another three months. SWP holders are required to maintain the validity of their 9(a)-Tourist Visa during the validity of the SWP.

Applications for extension of 9(a)-Tourist Visa and SWP issuance/extension are lodged with the Bureau of Immigration.

### ***Pre-arranged Employment Visa***

The Pre-arranged Employment Visa [9(g) Visa] is for foreign nationals who wish to undertake employment in the Philippines in a technical, managerial or confidential capacity. As a pre-requisite, the applicant applying for a 9(g) Visa is required to secure an Alien Employment Permit (AEP) from the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE). The AEP application must show that there is no local Filipino who is willing and competent to perform the job for which the foreign national is being hired and that the latter's admission would be beneficial to the public interest.

### ***Provisional Work Permit***

The Provisional Work Permit (PWP) is secured during the pendency of an application for a 9(g) visa to allow a foreign national to work immediately pending the approval of the 9(g) visa.

### ***Special Non-Immigrant Visa***

The Special Non-Immigrant Visa [47(a)(2) Visa] is issued to foreign nationals employed by enterprises registered with the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) as part of the incentives granted to PEZA registered entities.

### ***Multiple Entry Special Visa***

A Multiple Entry Special Visa (MESV) is granted to a foreign national assigned to regional or area headquarters (RHQ) or regional operating headquarters (ROHQ) of multinational companies and offshore banks duly licensed by the Bangko Sentral Ng Pilipinas to operate as an offshore banking unit (OBU) in the Philippines. A MESV holder is allowed to hold executive positions but cannot occupy any concurrent position with the affiliates of the RHQ, ROHQ or OBU.

### ***Family Members***

Foreign nationals granted with work visas are allowed to include their qualified dependents in their respective visa applications. Qualified dependents refer to the legally married spouse and unmarried and unemployed children below 21 years old.

### ***Application Process***

Work visa applications are generally lodged with the Bureau of Immigration. Work visa applications falling under certain categories will require the submission of the AEP prior to the approval by the immigration office.

Applications for issuance of the 47(a)(2) Visa are filed with the immigration desk of the PEZA.

The dependent's visa application may be lodged together with the application of the principal applicant, to be supported with an authenticated/consularised copy of the birth and/or marriage certificate of the qualified dependent.

## Other Visa Categories

### **Special Visa for Employment Generation**

This category of Multiple Entry Visa is applicable only to foreign entrepreneurs mainly focused on job generation through foreign investments. A basic qualification for admission to the program is that the foreign national must be directly or exclusively engaged in a viable and sustainable commercial investment/enterprise in the Philippines.

It is mandatory for a foreign national applying for a SVEG to show proof of his employment of at least 10 Filipino employees in accordance with Philippine Labour Laws.

### **Special Resident Retiree's Visa**

This type of visa is granted to foreign nationals intending to make the Philippines their retirement place. Foreign retirees applying for the visa are required to put up a deposit investment of varying amounts in the Philippines depending on the age bracket of the applicant.

An AEP must be obtained if the visa holder wishes to work in the Philippines.

### **Special Investor's Resident Visa**

Foreign nationals who wish to invest and reside in the Philippines may apply for the Special Investor's Resident Visa. To qualify for this visa, the foreign applicant must invest an amount equivalent to at least US\$75,000.00 in the Philippines.

## Non-Compliance

Non-compliance or violation of Philippine Immigration Laws shall be punishable by a fine, imprisonment or deportation.

## Contact

This Guide is intended to provide an overview of the immigration regulations and options for foreign nationals seeking to reside and work in the Philippines. For advice relating to a specific immigration matter please contact the following:

Name	Email	Telephone
Harold S. Ocampo	harold.s.ocampo@ph.pwc.com	+63 2845 2728 ext. 2029
Larissa C. Dalistan-Levosada	larissa.c.dalistan@ph.pwc.com	+63 2845 2728 ext. 2041
Toni Rose L. Capistrano	toni.rose.capistrano@ph.pwc.com	+63 2845 2728 ext. 2136

Last updated: October 2016

© 2016 PwC Philippines Immigration Services. All rights reserved.

Disclaimer: This publication is intended to provide only general information and it does not amount to professional, legal or tax advice. Readers should therefore not rely on the contents of this publication as a basis of specific action, without seeking professional advice.

"PricewaterhouseCoopers refers to PwC Philippines Immigration Services or, as the context requires, the PricewaterhouseCoopers global network or other member firms of the network, each of which is a separate legal entity.